



NEWS RELEASE

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Orange County Doctor Convicted of Six Counts of Health Care Fraud in Multi-Million Dollar Scam Involving Durable Medical Equipment

LOS ANGELES – A federal jury has convicted a Buena Park doctor for participating in a health care fraud scheme involving unnecessary procedures and prescriptions that led to Medicare paying out nearly \$3 million on fraudulent claims for durable medical equipment and nutritional supplies.

Following a five-day trial, Dr. Augustus Ohemeng, 62, was found guilty yesterday afternoon of six counts health care fraud.

While serving as medical director at Pacific Clinic in Long Beach, Ohemeng and others recruited Medicare patients and billed the national healthcare program for office visits that typically included unnecessary tests and procedures. The evidence presented at trial showed that Ohemeng also generated fraudulent prescriptions for medical equipment, power wheel chairs and enteral nutritional supplies, prescriptions that were sold to medical supply companies that used the fraudulent documents to bill Medicare for millions of dollars of unnecessary and undelivered medical supplies. "Nearly all, if not all, of the wheelchair prescriptions Ohemeng and [George Tarryk, another doctor who worked at Pacific Clinic] signed were written for people who could walk," according to court documents.

Over the course of four years, Ohemeng signed hundreds of these fraudulent prescriptions, many of which were blank so his office manager could fill in the details.

As a result of the fraudulent conduct involving Ohemeng and his co-conspirators, which took place from February 2005 through September 2009, \$5.6 million in fraudulent claims were submitted to Medicare, which paid approximately \$2.97 million.

As a result of yesterday's guilty verdicts, Ohemeng faces a maximum statutory sentence of 60 years in federal prison when he is sentenced on June 17 by United States District Judge Christina A. Snyder.

Ohemeng was among 10 defendants – including two doctors and a nurse – who were charged as a result of an investigation into Pacific Clinic, Ivy Medical Supply in Anaheim and Santos Medical Supply in South Los Angeles. All 10 defendants, including the owner of Ivy Medical Supply, have now been convicted, either as the result of guilty pleas or jury verdicts.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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